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Definition of a Major Facility

SUBJECT: Underground Injection Control (UIC)

Ground-Water Program Guidance #18 (GWPB #18)

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19,906

TO: Water Supply Branch Chiefs
UIC Representatives Regions I-XPurpose

40 CFR 122.3 defines a major "facility or activity"¹ as one that has been so classified by the Administrator and/or the Director. The purpose of this guidance is to define which facilities should be classified as major for the purpose of reporting and permitting in the Underground Injection Control (UIC) program.

Background

The difference in whether a facility is classified as a major or a minor only comes into play in the non-compliance reports (40 CFR 122.18) and in the permit requirement for a fact sheet (40 CFR 124.8). In the former, quarterly non-compliance reports are required of all major facilities while only annual reports are required from the other facilities (this is a federal reporting requirement). In the latter, fact sheets are only required from majors for the purpose of permitting.

On page 23742 of the preamble of the proposed UIC Regulations (40 CFR Part 146, April 20, 1979) Class I and IV wells are referred to as "major" facilities.

1. Facility or activity is defined as any "... UIC 'injection well' ... or any other activity (including land or appurtenances thereto) that is subject to regulation under the RCRA, UIC, NPDES, or 404 programs"

Guidance

For the purposes of quarterly reports and fact sheets for permits, only Class I and IV wells will be majors. In State programs, each State can vary from the above definition and target other well classes or portions thereof for additional requirements. For example: Certain Class II operations, such as tertiary recovery and some Class III operations, such as uranium solution mining, because of their area of influence, pressure gradient, location and potential direct impact on an Underground Source of Drinking Water (USDW) may be deemed as candidates for special treatment under the State's UIC program.

Implementation

This guidance goes into effect as soon as it is received by the Region and State offices. After a classification has been made of the injection well, a notification should go to all other programs holding permits on the facility for concurrence.

Filing Instructions

This guidance should be filed as Ground-Water Program Guidance #18 (GWPB #18).

Action Responsibility

For further information on this guidance memorandum contact:

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